

Employees, Volunteers, Community Partners, and Friends

NEWSLETTER



How DJJ Gave Back During the Flood of the Century



Pictured: Volunteers from the JRTC and the Cherokee County DJJ office work to help flood victims

The historic flooding that recently hit much of South Carolina had a devastating effect on many lives. DJJ employees, friends, family members, and many others were, like all South Carolinians, affected by the flood. Many employees lost their homes and possessions during the flood and many more suffered damages that will take a long time to fully repair. But even in the wake of the devastation many DJJ employees were looking to help their communities and their fellow employees who had suffered losses.

One of the first to respond was an administrator at Birchwood School (who wishes to remain anonymous) who, along with an agency psychologist, organized an effort to help DJJ employees affected by the flooding.

"I was hoping to start a mission that could help the officers and staff that lost everything in the flood," she said.

The project started with simple gift cards for employees who had lost homes during the flood, but quickly grew beyond this. "We got a tree cut down in a JCO's yard and got their roof repaired, collected clothes and toiletries, anything we could do," said the administrator. To date they have helped about 18

employees, providing everything from clothes to appliances. And, now working with volunteers from her church, her efforts are still ongoing. "We're still doing what we can," she notes.

Of course, there were others who also stepped in to help DJJ employee flood victims. After he had learned from the BRRF Facility Manager that many of DJJ's Juvenile Correctional Officers had been affected by the flood, Gary Evans from the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation (CPOA) came to DJJ to present \$500 checks from CPOA to nine officers who had suffered losses due to flooding.

"At the CPOA, our theme is 'Taking Care of Our Own,'" said CPOA South Carolina Field Representative Gary Evans. "And how better could we do that than by helping these officers in need?"

In the community, DJJ employees and volunteers began working to help flood victims as well, most notably partnering with the Department of Social Services (DSS) to help provide assistance to individuals in the areas impacted through the Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (DSNAP).

Throughout November and into December DJJ staff

volunteers from the Community Services Division traveled from their home counties to the affected counties to meet with victims of the flooding to help them with their DSNAP applications.

They greeted, pre-screened, and guided applicants through the process, distributed forms and materials, provided language interpretation services and assistance to those who are elderly or disabled, distributed food and water, directed them to services, and generally worked to provide a caring, comforting environment during a difficult time.



Gary Evans from the Correctional Peace Officers Foundation (CPOA), with the DJJ Officers that CPOA helped after the flood

Other DJJ employees volunteered at community food banks and shelters, such as employees at DJJ's Job Readiness Training Center (JRTC) in Columbia, who assisted Harvest Hope Food Bank in Columbia by preparing over 300 food boxes. Their prepared boxes were delivered throughout South Carolina for people in need, primarily victims affected by the flood.

Cherokee County DJJ office staff and juveniles collected food, cleaning supplies, clothes, diapers, and many other items for flood victims on two separate occasions. Their first trip to Columbia to deliver donations filled two car loads. For the second trip a 16-foot box truck was provided by Pioneer Metal Finishing and the floor of the truck was packed full of donated items.

York County also participated in the effort by donating TYES blankets they make with the youth, with the Spartanburg County office donating 22 cases of water for victims.

Of course, these are just a few of the ways that DJJ employees and volunteers helped to "give back" to their communities and fellow employees in the aftermath of the "Great Flood." But it's enough to illustrate the many ways in which DJJ is a family of caring.

Birchwood School Holds Sixth Annual Mr. Birchwood "Bulldog" Competition

The 6th Annual Mr. Birchwood "Bulldog" Competition was held Friday, October 30, 2015 at Birchwood Chapel. The competition was infectious with anticipation, joy and laughter—the culmination of three months of preparation. The contestants once again stole the show with their opening routine doing the "Classic Man" dance taught by Connie Mitchell.

The mission of the competition continues to be to foster confidence and develop social skills within all students competing; while inspiring those in the audience. This event was an opportunity to showcase gallantry, poise, teamwork, and talent, while building and promoting agency wide a collaborative and positive school environment the integrates all disciplines and core curriculums.

Committee members, sponsors, patrons, faculty, staff and many others went above and beyond to provide a quality event to include large and small task such as building backdrops, putting in place stage designs, rehearsing students, preparing music, ironing shirts, sewing on buttons, hemming pants, shining shoes, and even sponsored a carwash.

A lovely reception followed at the Birchwood School Media Center to celebrate with the contestants, their families, faculty, and staff.

The committee would like to thank each contestant and each sponsor, patron, student, faculty, and staff member for their unwavering support in all their efforts which made the 6th Annual Mr. Birchwood "Bulldog" Competition a memorable event.



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Teen After-School Centers Receive \$30,000 Gift

In August, the Office of Community Justice's (OCJ) Prevention and Intervention Office received a wonderful gift of approximately \$30,000, for use at the 38 Teen After-School Centers (TASCs) around the state.

Deborah Lakin, State Coordinator for Prevention and Intervention and her staff obtained "wish lists" from the TASC sites. From there numerous vendors and providers had to be contacted and the best prices negotiated. Over the subsequent 10 months, the staff teamed-up locating specific requested items, ordering, buying, picking up, and delivering all the supplies that \$30,000 can buy.

By the end of June the items that had been purchased included 500 book bags, 400 composition books, math and English class accessories, magnetic boards/letters for elementary classes, several hundred packs of notebook paper, pens, pencils, 300 three-ring binders, 30 electric pencil sharpeners, 300 hand held calculators, 20 Spanish/English dictionaries, 500 board games, and 300 soccer balls, footballs, and basketballs.

"What an adventure for all of the OCJ staff and others who were pulled into the sometimes harried shopping trips to WalMart and Educational Wonderland to pick up cartloads of supplies," said Beth Mackinem, Director of DJJ's Office of Community Justice. "While there were some challenges with the purchases, still the staff forged ahead knowing that the TASC youth would be the beneficiaries of all the supplies."

OCJ would like to express appreciation to the staff in other divisions and departments that helped ensure the success of this project: Dennis Looby and Steve Pullie who have been extraordinary cheerleaders in the "shopping" ordering and purchasing of the thousands of items, Ashley Edwards and Candlyn Ashcraft who shopped for, picked-up, and delivered most of the items, and Danny Johnson, Jay Grist, Horace Williams, and Mr. Muhamud Subash Ali, who seemed to always be around when an extra truck and or a pair of strong arms were needed to move boxes of the supplies around campus. OCJ would like to give a big THANK YOU to all of these folks and any others who helped give back to the youth in the DJJ TASC sites.

Allendale County Collaborates for Boys to Men Conference



On September 17th the Allendale DJJ County Office collaborated with the Allendale-Fairfax Middle-High School to provide the "Boys to Men Conference." The conference was focused on helping young men to make positive choices, become productive citizens, and to improve their academic performance.

About 100 young men from grades 7 to 10 attended, and heard from key note speakers including Major General Abraham Turner and Timothy Bowers.

Break-out sessions were offered on the topics such as how to set and reach personal goals, appropriate school behavior, and the negative effects of illegal drugs. The DJJ Insiders also presented during break-out sessions.

During lunch the DJJ Think Twice video was played for the group, and participants also had a chance to win door prizes.

Many of the young men in attendance stated that they learned something that will help them avoid the criminal justice system and become productive citizens.



Pictured from left to right: Sean Wilson, Low Country Prevention Specialist, Nicol Ashe, Low Country, Regional Administrator, Anya Prioleau, Administrative Specialist and Wayne Bennett, Allendale/Colleton County Director.

Orangeburg Juvenile Summer Youth Summit 2015



On August 1st the Orangeburg County DJJ Office and the First Circuit Solicitor's office held a Juvenile Summer Summit at Claflin University. The focus of the event was to encourage youth to make positive choices, inspire them to believe in the power of their dreams, and to provide information to the youth and their parents about local resources which may help them to achieve their goals.

Speakers included Diana Holt, a Columbia lawyer who earned national attention for her work to free wrongly convicted S.C. death row inmates, and who told her own personal story of overcoming a difficult childhood and a serious brush with the law, and Lieutenant Samuel J. Jenkins of the Orangeburg Department of Public Safety who entertained the audience with stories of his dealings with local criminals.

The DJJ Insiders also presented their stories and participated in a Q&A session with the audience. Thirteen vendors set up "Empowerment Stations" and provided resources and literature to the 28 juveniles and 13 parents who attended the summit.



Pictured below left to right are Charles Chandler DJJ Insiders Coordinator, Chris, Maurice, Brian, and Layla DJJ Insiders, Lieutenant Samuel Jenkins of Orangeburg Public Safety, Diana Holt, Attorney.

Birchwood Teacher Attends Science P.L.U.S. Institute

Lucia Jacobs from Birchwood School attended the Roper Mountain Science Center Science P.L.U.S. Institute during the summer of 2015. The Institute, 100% funded by a South Carolina Education Improvement Act (EIA) grant, gives intensive training in science teaching methods and activities to public school science teachers from throughout the State of South Carolina. The Institute emphasizes the Center's belief that all students deserve a good science education.

Each school district that submitted applicants is represented by at least one teacher chosen to attend the Institute. In the Institute's 23-year history, over 4,000 public school science teachers have participated in Science P.L.U.S. classes.

The courses for the 2015 Science P.L.U.S. Institute include six different one-week classes in weather, earth science, life science, space, and physical science. Classes are built around specific grade levels corresponding to the South Carolina Science Academic Standards for grades 1 -12.

Institute courses encourage teachers to incorporate math and language arts skills into their science lessons and to look for opportunities to make science connections when teaching other disciplines.

DJJ SCCA Chapter Holds Domestic Violence Workshop



The DJJ Chapter of South Carolina Correctional Association (SCCA) held its first workshop, "Understanding Domestic Violence; An Overview of

Progress, Prevention and Practice,” on October 23rd at the Bill Rogers Community Connections Center. There were attendees throughout the state and from various organizations as well as disciplines. South Carolina Assistant Deputy Attorney Heather Weiss provided information on the reformed Domestic Violence Bill while Richland County Senior Investigator Flynn Tanner shared how the reformed bill has changed the enforcement of the law.

Dr. Valerie Ekue of the South Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (SCCADVASA) discussed cultural barriers in reporting domestic violence.

Motivational speakers and domestic violence survivors YaKesha L. Means and Tamika L. Sims shared their personal stories, empowering women and men to take back control of their lives.

Pastor of Affecting the World Ministries Anthony R. Fleming brought the perspective of the faith community becoming actively involved in combating domestic violence. The Chapter was able to present a donation of \$200 to Sistercare.

The DJJ Chapter encourages employees to become members of the South Carolina Correctional Association by using payroll deduction to join. Due to a partnership with the South Carolina Law Enforcement Officers Association (SCLEOA), for \$2.71 per paycheck a DJJ employee can be a member of the American Correctional Association (ACA), South Carolina Correctional Association (SCCA), and South Carolina Law Enforcement Officer Association (SCLEOA). All they have to do is access the SCEIS website (MySCEmployee) and click on the recurring Voluntary Deductions. The deduction type is 2209-SCLEOA. In the deduction amount type “\$2.71” then hit save.

DJJ Chapter President Priscilla Pee asks that, if you join the organization, to please inform the chapter’s Membership Chair Aloysius Anderson by email: asande@scdj.net. The chapter is rewarded a refund check of \$3.00 per member, which enables them to provide services to employees as well as the community.

Kershaw County Office Celebrates Life of Team Member



In Loving Memory **Jennifer S. Donald**

On July 1, 2015 Kershaw County Intensive Supervision Officer Jennifer Donald passed away nine months after unexpectedly falling ill at work. Jennifer served DJJ for over 26 years, starting with the agency in 1988. In celebration of her life, Kershaw County DJJ staff dedicated their Restoring Carolina through Youth Service project to her memory.

Held in two parts, on September 15th a group of DJJ youths perform community service to clean and clear the area in front of the DJJ building. On September 16th the staff conducted a memorial and dedication by planting a rose in memory of Jennifer and putting up a memorial wooden stake. The Donald family was presented with a certificate of appreciation for Jennifer’s many years of service to DJJ and the families DJJ serves.

Staff also recognized the SC Department of Probation, Parole, and Pardon Services, and the Kershaw County Maintenance Department and presented them with certificates of appreciation for their ongoing support. Richland County’s Felicia Harris, Williamsburg County’s Carrice Watkins, Lee County’s Ron Swinton, the Sumter DJJ office, and the Kershaw Solicitor’s office were also given a special thanks for their support and help throughout the past few months. Midlands Administrator Amahl Bennett and Deputy Director Angie Rita were both present for this memorial.

DJJ Student Has “Got Talent”



To mark its twentieth anniversary, the PbS Learning Institute held its first “PbS Kids Got Talent Contest” in March of this year. Participating sites were invited to submit talents of all sorts. The contest was a PbS first. It exceeded all expectations in the number of contestants, amount of support received, and amount of interest for showcasing the talents of youths in PbS facilities across the country.

The CEC’s Facility Administrator, Beverly Carter, PbS Site Coordinator, Shaquan Grooms and Social Studies Teacher, Michael Martin, submitted what would become the winning entry of our own Tyrell who played the acoustic guitar while singing an original song, titled “Perfect to Me.”

During a Spiritual Development session lead by Chaplain Pandora Mikell, Tyrell shared that one of his hobbies was singing and playing the guitar. Chaplain Mikell invited him to showcase his talents by performing at chaplain services one Sunday.

Afterwards, Chaplain Mikell got in touch with Martin in the education department about Tyrell’s talents. In a language arts lesson involving music, Tyrell requested a book from a partner library about guitars. Martin got approval to bring in a guitar from home, and as people say “the rest is history.”

While at CEC, Martin often invited Tyrell to perform with outside visitors, such as the African American Gullah artist known as Aunt Pearly Sue, and with friends like artist in residence, Jeff Holland. Daniel Laurino, Probation Officer in the Richland County office, along with the agency’s Interstate Compact Coordinator, Mia Richardson-Pressley, who were very instrumental in getting all of the necessary approval forms completed so that Tyrell could travel to Indianapolis, along with his foster dad, to perform and receive his award.

Tyrell performed on August 14th during the PbS 20th Anniversary Celebration and Awards Gala, held at

the Indianapolis Speedway in Indiana. Director Murray attended the ceremony and introduced Tyrell to over 200 attendees. Tyrell has aspirations to be a professional singer and songwriter one day, and he appears to be well on his way to accomplishing his goals. Congratulations again to Tyrell, and to all the DJJ staff who recognized and nurtured his talents and who made this happen.

G.R.E.A.T. Graduation

Congratulations to graduates of the recent Southeast Region Gang Resistance Education and Training class, held at DJJ’s Bill Rogers Community Connections Center on August 10-14th.



DJJ staff pictured with the group (in no particular order) are: Laura Buttrey – Spartanburg, Michael Cancassi – Richland, Emily Claborn – Dorchester, Ashley Edwards – Richland, Sharelle Holliday – Richland, Jay Jinks – Newberry, Necole McCombs – Lexington, Beulah McNeill – Chesterfield, Rashaad Moore – Greenville, Michael Raiford – Newberry, Rene Sharkey – Lexington, April Siders – Richland, Stephanie Williams – Chesterfield, Vekiza Williams – Dorchester

Restoring Carolina through Youth Service 2015



Since its inception in 2009, Restoring Carolina through Youth Service (RC) has been held each September in conjunction with state and national 9/11 observance activities. This annual event continues to make a significant positive impact on the youth, families, and communities DJJ serves across the state, and has become one of the agency’s largest and most highly visible events. Recognizing all that staff do to give back to our communities throughout the year under the DJJ guiding philosophical principle of Balanced and Restorative

Justice, beginning this year RC was expanded to be a continuous year-round initiative with a “fall focus.”

As in past years RC community service projects will be completed in all 46 counties, along with DJJ's Community Alternatives, Residential Services, and Broad River Road Complex, and will include community service at homeless shelters, nursing homes, schools, public gardens, food pantries, clothing closets, and many others.

This years' annual DJJ Junior ROTC 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony: “*We Will Never Forget – America's Promise!*” took place at the Birchwood High School flag pole. Distinguished guests included members from SC Combat Veterans Association and DJJ Senior Management Staff.

Along with a moving ceremony that included the National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance, JROTC cadets offered reflections and a historical perspective of 9/11 and the purpose of Restoring Carolina.

At precisely noon ceremony participants and DJJ staff across the state observed a brief moment of silence during a ceremonial lowering of the Flag to half-staff and TAPS by the JROTC Honor Guard, and a wreath was laid at the base of the flag pole by the JROTC Command Staff and special guests, including DJJ Director Sylvia Murray. After the ceremony, members from SC Combat Veterans Association had lunch with the Cadets and shared their stories and memories of 9/11. The program culminated with a Palmetto Pride community service project where students picked up trash and debris around Birchwood High School.

“Please know that your support of *Restoring Carolina* is greatly appreciated as we continue to inspire hope among the youth and families we serve, while helping our communities become safer places to work, live, and play,” said Director Murray. “We have a lot to be thankful for at DJJ and I am profoundly proud of our work on behalf of youth and families.”

Administrative Services Division Helps Ronald McDonald House

DJJ's Administrative Services Division recently held a collection for a local Ronald McDonald House. Working with the Rehabilitative Services Division and the Consultation & Evaluation management team, they helped to collect needed items like laundry detergent, canned food, and small donations of cash in “Ronald McDonald” boots placed in different

locations at BRRC and on Shiver's Rd. This was structured as a competition between the departments, with point values assigned to the different items. The Office of Information Technology came out on top with a whopping 7,303 points for donations!



The division also raised \$180, which was transferred to gift cards. Yet another example of how DJJ cares!

Two Employees Complete Basic Detention Training Program at Criminal Justice Academy



Above photo – Left to Right: Thomas Williams, Rehabilitative Services Deputy Director; Wanda Barr, Training Manager; Sylvia Murray, Agency Director; Christine Wallace, Training Administrator; Robin Owens, Administrative Services Deputy Director



Above photo - Left to Right: Christine Wallace, Training Administrator; Sylvia Murray, Agency Director; Al Counts, Training Coordinator; Thomas Williams, Rehabilitative Services Deputy Director; Robin Owens, Administrative Services Deputy Director

The Office of Staff Development and Training is proud to announce that two training staff have successfully completed The Basic Detention Training Program at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy. The 3-week residency training is a rigorous training that provides candidates with the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the duties as a certified (class 2) detention officer in the state of South Carolina.

Wanda Barr, Training Manager, successfully completed the training in July and Alphonso Counts, Training Coordinator, successfully completed the program in September. The skills obtained will be utilized to enhance the agency's current Rehabilitative Services Basic training as well as to develop a detention specific basic training program for the Juvenile Detention Center. Successful candidates are now eligible to attend additional trainings at the academy to include the Basic Instructor Development (BID) Course.

Birchwood School Elects First Student Council

After much planning and preparation, Birchwood School held its first student council debate on September 14th, at the Birchwood Chapel. Under the direction of the Birchwood School BARJ Facilitator and School Student Council Chairperson, students prepared campaign posters, wrote and rehearsed campaign speeches; while learning about democracy and student government. Recognizing that Birchwood is not the traditional school setting, Mr. David Fuller, the school principal, felt the need to incorporate a student council as an avenue for our juveniles to share ideas, interest, and express concerns regarding improvement opportunities.

The final process was very simple. Each dorm would have a student representative on the school council with the title of **Dorm Senator**. Students were required to fill out an application and attain one teacher recommendation.

After the debates were held, students from the dorms represented were able to vote and cast their ballots the next day, prior to their first period class.

Many thanks to all of the Birchwood students, teachers, staff, security, and especially the committee, who participated in this inaugural event.

Congratulations to the new Student Council Dorm Senators as we look forward to great things from

each of you. The Student Council later met to plan their first project, a school-wide food drive in honor of Restoring Carolina 2015.

In Pictures



Julie Niehous and three USC graduate intern students donate 255 young adult novels to DJJ as part of the "A Chance Through Literacy" project.



DJJ volunteers wash cars as part of a United Way fundraiser car wash/hot dog lunch/bake sale. The event raised over \$600 for United Way.



Mushell Delafield, Records Director at the Willow Lane Infirmary, is recognized as one of DJJ's "Unsung Heroes."

DJJ Promotions & Announcements

Sherman Clark has been selected for the position of Program Monitor in the Community Alternatives Section of Community Services Division.

Sandra Collier has been named the new County Director for the Tri-County Office

Jo B. Crosby has agreed to serve as the Interim Information Technology Director for DJJ.

Keshia S. Elmore has been selected as the Release Authority Manager in the Office of Legal and Policy Coordination.

Krista Emory has agreed to serve as the Interim Human Resources Director.

Fred Gentner has been appointed as the DJJ Physical Plant Director

Rochelle Harvey has been promoted to Nurse Manager at Juvenile Detention Center.

Mamie Hayes-Hartwell has been selected as the SCDJJ Teacher of the Year.

Shatoria Holmes is now a Licensed Practical Nurse who will be working at the Birchwood Dispensary.

Eric Rousey has been promoted to the position of DJJ Communications Coordinator.

Jennifer Wallace has been hired as the Director of DJJ Volunteer Services.

Jan Wrecsics has been named the new Director of Nursing at DJJ.